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homemakers' chat
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Monday, May 17, 1943

Subject: "WARTIME FRUIT-CANNING." Information from Food Production officials of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and officials of the Office of Price Administration.

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Conversation today is about putting up fruit...about canning fruit and fruit juice, and making marmalade, jam, jelly and other sweet fruit spreads in this second summer of the war.

Time was when every American housewife canned, and preserved to suit herself and her family. Time was when your home-canning was your own private business and you did it as you pleased. Time was when you could indulge your family's sweettooth to the limit...put up all fruit with the thickest, heaviest sugar-sirup...fill your pantry shelves with the sweetest of sweet preserves... use sugar by the ton if you liked and could afford it. Time was when you could waste or save...can well or poorly...and it mattered to no one but your own family.

But that time was before the war, and before shortages of food, shipping, labor and material. Today your canning matters to your country as well as your family. Today what and how you can may have an effect on your country's food supplies as well as on your family's meals. Your home canning today can help in 4 different ways. First, it can help save the fruit crop. Fruit is a most important food. You can keep it from going to waste by canning the surplus. Second, your home canning...every jar of fruit you put up saves commercially processed fruit, now so short it is rationed. Also every jar of fruit you can saves freight space for war materials...saves labor, packaging, valuable material. Third, your fruit canning this year can help conserve the country's

sugar supply, now shorter than last year. Finally, the fruit you put up this year can help keep your family in best health...fit to do war jobs well. A plentiful supply of home-canned fruit is one of the best and most economical ways to make sure your family has enough fruit, especially when fresh fruit is scarce.

The Government this year has set a limit to the amount of sugar you can have for canning because sugar is scarcer than it was during last year's canning season. Though the allowance of canning sugar this year again is one pound of sugar for each 4 quarts or 8 pounds of finished canned fruit...with 5 pounds of sugar allowed each person for jams, marmalades and so on...the total amount of sugar any one person may have is 25 pounds. That is the limit for both canning and preserving. Most people won't need nearly as much as 25 pounds for canning. And with the scarcity of sugar no one will want to get more than the least amount needed for putting up fruit.

Here is how you get your sugar allowance for canning. You apply in writing to your local ration board telling how many quarts or pounds of canned fruit you intend to put up from fresh fruit. You also state in writing the amount of sugar you intend to use for jams, jellies, preserves and so on. You take this written application to the ration board, or mail it along with your War Ration Book One. The board may want some other facts, too. They may want to know whether you are going to put up your own fruit or buy fruit...how much fruit you canned last year...or something about the canning equipment you have on hand. These extra facts the board may need to know in order to decide the fair amount of sugar to allow you. The board has the double job of helping you save as much fruit as possible yet helping the country conserve sugar in the present scarcity.

When the board has considered your application, they will give you sugar-allowance coupons with values of 1, 3, 5, or 10 pounds--and return your War

Ration Book One to you. You will not use any stamps from War Ration Book One in buying sugar for canning. You will simply buy your canning sugar with these sugar-allowance coupons.

In order to make out your application properly and give the right amounts of canned and preserved fruit, you need to make a canning plan in advance. And to make that plan, you need to know how much a bushel or peck of the different fruits weighs, and how much fruit will make a quart when canned. You can get these figures in the folder or wartime canning just published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture Washington, D. C.

You also need to consider canning equipment when you make your plans and write out your application. Be sure you have the jars, tops and other equipment to put up the fruit properly. Check over the jars and covers you have at home to be sure they will seal properly. If you need new canning equipment, don't wait until the fruit is ripe to buy it. Get it now before you make your application for sugar.

You can stretch your canning sugar in many different ways. A little sugar helps fruit hold color and flavor, but isn't necessary to keep fruit from spoiling. So you can put up some fruit unsweetened and add sugar when you serve, and you can put up other fruit with just a thin or moderately thin sirup instead of the heavy sirup you once used.

But stretching sugar in canning is a whole story in itself. Let's talk about that another day.